

"ALL DOWN THE RIVER."

IN a former number* I described how timber is made in Canada, and its removal from its stump to the river on the banks of which it was made. Those who have read the account will, I trust, be sufficiently interested to follow it through the remaining stages of its journey from the forest to the market, the "drive" down its native river, and the run, banded up into a raft, down the St. Lawrence. Towards the end of March—the shantymen's long month, for then the days lengthen out and the frost leaves the timber, making it far tougher to chop—most of the available timber is cut, the trees become smaller and scarcer, and the liner is hard pushed to find work for his gang. At the same time the snow melts throughout the woods, and the surface of the roads, hard beaten as it is, becomes rotten, so that the horses "slump in;" while here and there appear patches of bare ground.

All hands now prepare for a remove: the most skilful hewer, with the aid of a less experienced companion, is commissioned to make a canoe, the rest of the men busy themselves with the manufacture of boathook-handles and handspikes for the drive; and the ox-teamster and his mate drive their cattle to the dépôt, and give them in charge to the farmer there, who feeds them until he considers the grass is sufficient to pasture them. Then he turns them loose, to roam at their pleasure, merely looking them up occasionally to count heads, and to keep them in health by giving them salt.

At length the roads become impracticable for timber-drawing: the horses draw their last load, the canoe, to the river bank, and make the best of their way homewards. Then the canoe, with those of birch bark, which have been kept at the river-bank since the preceding winter, are launched, the men's baggage, with the pots and pans, are embarked, and the men, taking their seats, paddle slowly down the stream to the first fall or rapid, clearing the river as they go of the stray sticks landed on the bank by the high water of the previous autumn, or caught by the overhanging bushes. On their arrival, the men pitch their tents which they have brought with them; and, spreading their blankets, begin camp life—very pleasant indeed, in such lovely scenery, when the weather is dry and warm, but anything but comfortable if it rains much.

* See No. cxxxii. page 47.

If the water be not sufficiently high to admit of the drive being begun, the gang of the shanty first vacated generally find work enough for the interim in repairing the "improvements"—the shoots, slides, dams, and booms by which the timber is safely passed through the perilous parts of the river, and in which, on rivers which have been long worked, some thousands of pounds are invested. Shoots and slides, built, the former through the middle, the latter at the side of the stream, protect the timber from the rough bottom of a rapid, or bring it, by a *détour*, from above a cataract to below it; dams, erected at right angles to the stream at the heads of slides, serve to increase the flow of water through them; while the booms—lengths of timber strongly chained together—are strung across the stream just above the falls or rapids, to prevent the logs from dashing headlong over them.

So soon as the water in the river has risen high enough, the men repair to the boom which restrains the timber from rushing pell-mell through the first rapid on its downward course, and commence the process of putting the timber through the slide. These booms above falls or rapids must be placed some distance above them before the strength of the current has perceptibly increased, or the force of the stream would press the mass of timber so violently against the boom that, independently of the danger of its being carried away, it would be almost impossible to guide each stick through the opening when required. Near the end of the boom, at about fifteen or twenty feet from the shore, on the same side as the slide, is built a pier, a stout framework of timber ten or twelve feet square, some four or five feet higher than the depth of the stream. This is sunk to the bottom, well loaded with stones, and stands firmly against the current. Another similar pier is built at the outer side of the head of the slide, and between these is a line of booms to keep the timber from being sucked into the main stream. Four or five of the men take their station at the head of the main boom, and with boat-hook and handspike separate the logs from the mass which presses upon them, marshalling them in order through the gap between the pier and the shore; while the remainder, boat-hook in hand, are posted along the side booms from pier to pier, ready to receive and forward each stick as it comes, and preventing too many from coming together, as they might get jammed across and stop the rest, guide them safely into the mouth of the slide. It is pleasant to see the logs glide through the slides; to watch them sway from side to side on first entering, as though reluctant to travel by so narrow a road; to notice them gradually quicken their pace as the angle of the slide increases; and to remark how, after taking their final plunge from the mouth, and ploughing along under water for twenty or thirty feet, they reappear on the surface, their wet sides glistening in the sunshine, while they roll jollily as though, after all, they had enjoyed the fun. Once more at liberty to pursue their journey down the river, the more fortunate sticks travel as far as the next boom; others, drifting into quiet corners where there is but little current, are caught and detained

by the overhanging brushwood: some are sucked into the eddy at the foot of the fall, and some arrested in mid-current by the boulders lying just beneath the surface of the water, form what is technically termed a "jam."

To clear an eddy is, generally speaking, but the work of a few hours, for a canoe is manned, and the sticks towed out one after another; but there was one famous eddy on our river where no canoe, save at great risk, could go, and which was safe to give work to half the gang for a day and a half or two days. It was in a bay, forming three parts of a circle, nearly in the centre of which the timber kept slowly revolving, for the most part just beyond reach of the boat-hooks of the men, who stood around, on the parts of the shore nearest the eddy. As soon as a piece was forced outside the rest, three or four boat-hooks were plunged into it, as many impatient cries of "Hale!" "Hale donc, fort!" were given by the excitable French Canadians, and the stick was rescued from its restless imprisonment, unless, as sometimes happened, the eddy would prove too strong for the few hooks that could reach the stick, and there was a desperate struggle to shake the boat-hook free, before it was dragged from the owner's hands, or the owner himself was pulled into the water.

A far more arduous and exciting undertaking than clearing an eddy is the dispersion of a "jam." These "jams" usually form in some part of the river not sufficiently destructive to the timber to necessitate any "improvement," but where the stream dashes swiftly over a rough, uneven bed, and huge boulders either break or lie just beneath the surface of the water. Against these boulders some stick, descending the stream broadside on, becomes fixed, and being quickly joined by others, the force of the stream forms them into a compact mass, an impassable barrier, which each succeeding piece serves to strengthen and solidify. To an inexperienced eye the attempt to separate such a confused, immovable-looking mass appears a forlorn hope, piled as the logs are in some cases two deep upon the boulders in the middle, and jammed against the side of the river. But the foreman steps out from the bank upon the half acre or so of timber, and, taking a survey of the lower part of it, which is, of course, the key of the position, quickly decides which stick the "timber grips" shall first enclose in their stern embrace. The "grips"—large iron hooks connected by a short piece of chain—are then knocked in, one on each side of the piece selected, a rope is made fast to the connecting chain, and the end of it carried ashore, where the men seize hold of it, and haul: or, if the place be a favourite spot for a "jam," there is often a rough windlass constructed between two trees, round which a turn or two of the rope is taken and the men heave, while the foreman and another man or two persuasively shake the stick with their handspikes. For some time windlass and handspike are fruitlessly plied: the stick is firm and will not budge. If it continue too long immovable, another must be tried, and another, and another, until at last one does come. Then the whole mass moves, and the foreman and his helpers with the handspike run for their lives,

for they cannot tell whether the whole "jam" may not go at once. But this does not often happen, except in light "jams." Generally the "grips" are again and again fixed, the foreman and his companions ply their levers, and the men heave. Now one, now two, sometimes six or seven logs are dragged from the mass, until at last the stick upon which all the rest depend is hauled from its position, and the greater part of the remainder follow. It is easy work to clear away the rest, and the "jam" is dispersed.

But the most wearisome and exhausting part of the work on the drive is kedging the timber *en masse* through the lakes. The logs are detained by a boom at the head of the lake, while the men choose out the longest sticks and join them together, so as to form a temporary boom of sufficient length to encircle the rest of the timber. The ends of this boom are made fast to opposite sides of the river, and the stream fills out the slack; the boom above is opened, the timber drifts in, and when all is arrived the boom is closed around it. All would now be ready to cross the lake, but as almost every stick of timber floats with an angle up and not a flat side, and as the surrounding boom does not enclose them tightly enough to prevent their rolling when trodden upon, the footing is not firm enough for the men to work upon, and there is no place for the capstan. So a crib is made: two floats, young trees eight or ten inches in diameter, of the average length of the timber, are laid parallel to each other, about thirty feet apart, and three more trees, flattened this time and called traverses, are laid across them at equal intervals, and pinned down to them. As many logs as can be squeezed in are then forced under this frame, which, compressing them tightly, keeps them flat, and affords a secure foothold. The capstan is a piece of a pine tree, five or six feet long, stripped of its bark and pierced with auger holes for the hand-spikes, which serve as capstan bars: a large hole is bored into it at one end, and it is fitted on an enormous pin, which is driven into the middle of the centre traverse, and on which it revolves. The ropes and kedges, the men's belongings, the cook and his utensils, are then embarked on the crib, and all is ready for a start. But a start can only be made when the wind is dead aft, or when it is calm weather, for as the raft thus hastily formed extends over an area of more than two acres, its crew of twenty or twenty-five men are powerless to move it against a contrary breeze, or to keep a side wind from driving it ashore. The weather having become favourable, two log canoes, lashed together, receive the kedge, to which is attached a long rope. To the extent of this rope the canoes carry forward the kedge and sink it, leaving over the spot a "bunn," a small, flat-bottomed boat, floating at the end of a light rope, also made fast to the kedge. Returning to the raft, the canoes are laden with another kedge, and while the men are heaving up to the kedge just dropped, the crew of the canoe coil up the slack of the rope as it comes in. So soon as the kedge first sunk is arrived at, and while the men are hauling it up, the canoes start with the second and sink it as they did the first. Thus no time

is lost; one kedge after another is put out, and the capstan is always going. Notwithstanding, it is most tedious work, as may be judged from the fact that it will take three days to cross a lake twelve miles long, though the men work all the time the wind is favourable, both night and day.

Safely passed through all these successive dangers and delays, the timber arrives at the last boom, some little distance from the mouth of the river. Here is the rafting ground, and here it is that the logs are brought into order and rafted up before facing the more powerful rapids of the Ottawa, the Long Sault, and the Grand Sault; and the tempestuous waters of Lake St. Peter and Bay St. Croix on the St. Lawrence. Here is gathered a supply of rafting materials of all sorts, withes and traverses, lashing poles and raft oars, and here the men set to work at their last regular labour before their last half-idle, half-laborious task of navigating the raft to Quebec.

Rafting is of two kinds: by cribs or by drams: the former method is used above Ottawa, as only a single crib at a time can pass the Chaudière Slide at that city; while the latter is generally practised when the raft starts from below Ottawa. The cribs are made in the same way as that on which the men stand in crossing the lakes, and upon each are hauled four loading sticks, which are laid across the traverses. They are lashed together by stout poles laid across the traverses, and firmly secured by withes. These withes are birch rods, about one or two inches in diameter, and are prepared for use by being twisted until they become so pliable that sailors, seeing stray ones used at the timber dépôts in Quebec, call them "wooden ropes."

In rafting by drams, the sticks themselves are made to act as floats, and two of equal length having been selected, an end of a traverse is fastened to each with a stout ash pin: a section of a traverse is then pinned, in continuation of its length, to each log, and another log added to each piece of traverse, which is treated in the same way as its predecessor. To these are added two more logs, and, across the ends of this, the third pair, is pinned the second whole traverse. This frame, three times the length of a crib, is filled with timber in the same way, and has a proportionate quantity of top timber hauled upon it. The drams are then lashed together, like the cribs, endways, by lashing poles, and sideways by chains passed round the outside sticks of neighbouring drams.

The craft is now built, and the next thing is to fit her for sea. Masts are erected twelve or fifteen feet high, upon which are hoisted lug sails, and as a raft covers a large extent of water, a dozen masts and sails are not considered too many. Our craft, not being much more than an acre in area, had only eight sails—five in a row across the bows, and three across the stern.

These sails are, however, capable of use only when the raft is on one of the lakes, or the wind is almost dead aft, for the lee-way of such a craft is so great that it requires plenty of room to test her sailing capabilities. In the rapids, and in critical places, next to nothing can be done to move the raft end on, the usual service of the motive power

being to put the raft in proper position in taking and running through the rapids, and this motive power is afforded by the oars—ponderous great things—young trees squared and thinned a little for the blade, with an ambitious attempt at a handle at the other end. A supply of these oars is taken on board, rowlocks are fitted on the loading sticks, a good sized anchor and chain, with several coils of different sized rope, complete the equipment of the craft, and it only remains to furnish accommodation for the crew. This is soon arranged: a hutch is knocked up of inch plank, which accommodates the men, a smaller one receives the provisions, cooking and eating utensils, and a caboose for the use of the cook renders the raft, when provisioned, ready for the cruise. The size of the men's hutch (they are dignified by the title of "cabins,") varies, of course, with the number of the crew. We were twenty-three in all, and our house was 15 feet long by 12 wide, the walls being about 5½ feet high, with the roof sloping up to three or four feet more. This scarcely allowed each of us as many cubic feet of air as must now be provided for a soldier in barracks, but as there was no door to close up the doorway, and as in some places there were gaps an inch or two broad between the planks, the ventilation was not so bad as it might have been. Indeed, there was quite a nice fresh breeze usually blowing through an interstice just over my head, about two inches in width, the only objection to be raised against it being, that I felt it, perhaps, a little too much, through one pair of blankets, on nights when it froze. I watched these proceedings with interest, for, combining business with instruction, I had arranged to go down on the raft as clerk in charge. Nominal charge, however, for all guidance of the raft, and all authority over the men, is centred in the pilot, and my only duties were to take charge of the cash and to pay our way down.

Everything was now ready, and the pilot, assuming the command, ordered the shore ropes to be cast off, and a few strokes being given with the oars to put us in mid-stream, we drifted tranquilly, on a lovely spring evening, out upon the broad stream of the Grand River, as the shantymen always designate the Ottawa.

In emerging from our little river, it became necessary to man the oars to attempt to reach the middle of the current of the Ottawa. I observed the preparations with interest, for I had often seen raft-oars in Quebec, and I was curious to know how they were managed. Pulling an oar in an out-rigger is a very different accomplishment to rowing on the sea; but an adept in either branch of the art would be sorely puzzled to know what use to make of a raft-oar, about twenty or twenty-five feet in length, and five or six inches square in the middle. The rower has to stand close beside the top stick on which his oar works, and bends over it to take his stroke, placing the leg nearest the water against the stick by way of stretcher. Novices in the art always will put the wrong leg against the stick, from fear of losing their balance, and thus lose half their power. It is clumsy work, but if the men keep time well, their united movement looks well,

as do all motions of any considerable number of men acting in unison.

We failed in our efforts to gain the mid-current, and the wind in the course of half-an-hour sent us ashore, where we had no resource but to snub. "Snubbing" is the term employed by raftsmen to denote making fast, and must be used, I suppose, from the peculiar process always attendant upon stopping and mooring a raft. When the unwieldy thing is driven ashore by the wind, being still under the force of the current, it has great impetus, owing to its size, which no rope could at once check. A rope is sent out astern, and is made fast to some tree on the bank, a couple of turns taken round a traverse, and the way of the raft gradually checked, or snubbed, until it comes to a complete standstill, and is secured at both ends.

It was late in the evening when we snubbed, and no farther progress was to be made that night. At daylight next morning we started again, and made a few miles, when we had to stop again, opposite the village of supply, thence to receive our last provisions for the voyage, and to complete our equipment with a "bunn." Setting forth again in the calm of the evening, we travelled all night, and at breakfast time next morning were not far from the first and greatest rapid—the Long Sault, drifting down between the sombre heights of L'Orignal, close on our right, and the cleared lands of the Augmentation of Grenville, stretching away in the distance on our left. Our prospects were not encouraging, for the left bank was the proper station whence to take the Long Sault, and we were so close to the head of that rapid that the attempt to cross by rowing would have been utterly hopeless. Presently, the bay of L'Orignal opened on our right, and into it the pilot was fain to make the best of his way, as it presented the best snubbing ground at which to look out for a steamer, for on the arrival of one now depended all our hopes. We were fortunate in this respect, for we had not waited long when one appeared, towing behind it a raft, and passed us on its way to the "Head" of the Long Sault. The pilot and I walked up to the village of L'Orignal, and bent our steps to the end of the wharf there, thence to signal the steamer on her return. She soon appeared, and on the pilot's waving his hat, stood in towards the wharf, when a long course of chaffering ensued between her captain and the pilot, in the true spirit of French Canadians. The captain of the steamer had it almost his own way, for he knew what a fix we were in; and we had to accede pretty much to his terms. The bargain struck, the steamer stood on to the next wharf to take in fuel. Towards evening she came down to us, and a rope having been twisted round two separate traverses, was finally made fast to a third, and the end hove aboard the steamer. The shore fastenings were cast off; we traversed the stream obliquely; and, as the night was closing in, reached the opposite bank, and made fast to some trees growing in the water, after running foul of the raft which had preceded us, and slightly arousing the ire of its crew.

Next morning, early dawn saw the men busy despatching their breakfast, and then they pre-

pared for running the rapid. Old rowlocks were repaired, new ones made; extra hands engaged; and towards noon, half the raft, manned by all hands, except the cook, started. I, however, went no farther than the wharf of the steamer which runs between Grenville and Ottawa, near which is situated the terminus of the Carillon and Grenville railroad; and, addressing myself to the manager, requested him to send the "cars" to meet and bring up our men. The company are always willing to do this, provided there are a sufficient number of men, charging a tariff rate of 6*d.* a head to carry the men twelve miles—an immense boon to them, as it spares them a dusty tramp of that length, after the labour of putting through, besides saving them nearly three hours' time. This arranged, I returned to the part of the raft left behind, and took up my station to keep off intruders. The neighbourhood of the raft's snubbing ground at "The Head" bears a very bad name, and is reported to be haunted by females of the lowest character, who take advantage of the absence of the rest of the men to board the raft and, overcoming the opposition of the cook by the enticement of spirits (forbidden on board a raft), or even by force, pilfer the pork-barrels. But as the clerk of the raft is generally supposed by them to be above the attractions of whisky, or because two are stronger than one, they do not board a raft when the clerk is to be seen. So, while the cook stayed behind to look after the pork-barrels, I stayed behind to protect the cook by acting as scare-crow. Nothing particular, however, happened; one canoe hovered near, but the crew did not venture to board us.

The men returned in the afternoon, having experienced a stroke of bad luck. The wind, which had been almost doubtful in the morning, had veered more to the north as they entered the rapid and had driven them, despite their rowing, out of the right channel, into the edge of the dangerous "black swells" which bound the channel. Two of the drams had been broken up, one of them badly, ten or twelve sticks having escaped from it. The men were full of accounts of the way in which the timber had plunged and jumped, and one lad, whose first experience of the Long Sault it was, had been fairly frightened, when, from his station in the stern, he had been momentarily unable to see the men in the bow.

So there was no more running that day. The next morning the wind was again doubtful, and the pilot would not venture out until the evening, when it drew more aft. Casting off our moorings we were slowly and quietly drifted by the current round the sweep of Grenville Bay, close to the shore. As we passed the railway station and the head of the canal, we could dimly hear the roaring of the waters of the most dangerous rapid on the Ottawa, as they rushed through the narrow channel. The eye of every man is now eagerly fixed on the pilot, as standing on a loading stick in the centre of the raft, he motions them to row, to stop rowing, or to reverse their oars. And now, in turning the corner at "The Head," we enter the straight channel, and can discern breakers before us.

To the left lie the shallow, babbling waters of

the dangerous "Cellar;" on the right roll the mischief-makers of the morning before the "Black Swells"—quieter, but still more to be feared; while between them, scarcely wider than the band on which we stand, is the regular channel. Here also the waters roar, and the surface is broken into fierce-looking waves, but the swells are not powerful enough to break up a raft, and the water is deep enough to carry us safely over the rugged bottom. Faster and faster we approach, and eagerly the pilot cons the progress of the band. Now we are drawing perilously close to the current of the Cellar.

"Pull, bow oars, to the right."

Steadily and strongly the men row, but the band is heavy, and will not swing well. Again the pilot waves his hand, this time to the stern oars, to help in turning the raft by pulling to the left.

"Ah! too much! Reverse all."

Quickly the men leap over the sticks and begin rowing in opposite directions, and a stroke or two soon puts us right. Now we fairly enter the struggling waters, the lashings scroop uneasily, and a slight tremor runs through the band, as the leading dram takes its first dip. I plant my feet firmly and prepare, if things come to the worst, to cling, tooth and nail, to the stick on which I stand. But no such dreadful need occurs. The lashings creak and groan with the strain laid upon them, and the water dashes over the bottom timber, as we rush swiftly past the black rolling waters on our right, but the loading sticks are scarcely splashed, and the disturbance to the footing is not nearly so great as is experienced on board ship in a stiff breeze. Nor did it take us long to run through—the worst part of the rapid we must have got over in less than five minutes, and then there only remained the less dangerous passage of the smaller rapids below, terminating with the "Horse-Race," where we dashed along at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour, the outside sticks appearing to pass within four or five feet of the rocky bank, on which, had we struck, the greater part of the raft must have gone in pieces. This was the last critical part of the rapid, and soon we floated into the quieter waters at the tail, and rejoined the other part of our raft.

The greater part of the next day was passed in re-raftering the loosened logs, and searching for the missing ones of the wrecked dram. A thorough search of all the accessible parts of the banks above us still left us three or four sticks short, and as all else was ready, we could not delay more, and with the raft again united, started to face Carillon Rapid. This was but tame work compared with the excitement we had just passed through, the only moving incident being that a short stick by some means caught in the bottom, and rearing up on end, fell over on the others, somewhat dangerously close to a man in the bow, who had to jump out of its way.

At Carillon I landed to inquire about a steamer which was to have met us just below there, but she was engaged, and we had to continue our journey alone, as best we might. Three days' lazy drifting through lovely scenery, with occasional intervals of still lazier unwelcome rest, brought us to the head of the Lake of Two Mountains.

Starting the morning after, with a fine fair breeze, we made the best day's travelling of our voyage. The expanse of the lake afforded us means of testing our sailing capabilities, and every advantage was taken of the opportunity. All sail was made, and spare planks reserved for the purpose were thrust perpendicularly between the logs, to stop as far as possible our lee-way. All went well, and very refreshing it was, after so long a bout of sluggish progress and baffled wishes, to feel that we were doing something independently of the current, as on the approach of evening we cheerily passed the little Indian village which lies on the north side of the lake, and gladly took our last look at the distant view of the railway bridge at Lachnie. Had the breeze held on for an hour or two longer we should have well attained our aim and entered the Little River, the mouth of the Ottawa, which, out of three, is chosen as the road for rafts going to Quebec. But just as we gained sight of our port the wind provokingly deserted us, and left us under the influence of the current of another channel of the Grand River. The attempt to escape from this cost the men a long fatiguing spell of rowing, tiring them out to no purpose, and we had to anchor.

The thumping of a steamer's paddlewheels awoke us next morning, and we engaged her to put us into the stream of the Little River, down which we were drifted for awhile, and then the wind drove us ashore, where we had to stay, wind-bound, all the rest of the day. The next day, being Sunday, we did not move, and it was very pleasant to be able to roam over the farms which lined the river's bank—a cheerful contrast in their first fresh coat of green to the staring yellow timber. Monday morning saw us again on our journey, running through the swift and sinuous parts of the river which precede the Grand Sault, near the head of which rapid we snubbed again, preparatory to splitting the raft in two again before running that rapid and passing under the three bridges built across the Little River. This was a journey requiring care, as we learnt from the story of a band of elm which had essayed it a day or two previous. Unprovided with good ropes, they had incautiously ventured too far down the stream before snubbing, and in attempting to do so their rope broke. They tried again with the same result, and were now so far down that nothing remained for them but to run the rapid, all unprepared as they were. They had not gone far before they discovered the hopelessness of their attempt. In approaching the first bridge the band was drawn into a wrong channel, and drove straight towards one of the piers of the arch. The men saw their danger, and all escaped in their canoe, but the timber was all cast loose, the greater part of it piled up against the pier, and much of it lost.

Our pilot being incompetent to guide us through the ensuing difficult navigation, engaged a substitute, and for the trip laboured at the oar. Both divisions went safely through everything, and we were now past the dangers of the Ottawa. The Grand Sault can scarcely be said to deserve its name well, for though the swell is high, the channel is broad, and it is very much shorter than

the Long Sault. The incline of its bed must be very steep, for the waters form a kind of step down which the timber seems to jump rather than to glide.

The bands were stopped a short distance below the last bridge, and while the men were occupied lashing them together, I went to Montreal to try and procure a steamer to tow us from the mouth of the Little River, and to obtain some more provisions. I failed in procuring a steamer, but on my return I found that the pilot had been more successful, for he had fallen in with the captain of a steamboat, and awaited only my endorsement of the bargain which he had made to have the comfortable assurance that a steamer was attending us in the St. Lawrence. Once more dropping down the stream we passed Laprarie—Laprarie Rapid it is called, though in the high water of the spring, during which we passed it, there was only a part of the river where the current was swifter than elsewhere, and were soon brought again to a standstill with a contrary wind. Towards evening it fell calm, and the pilot thought he would push on to reach his steamer before nightfall. We put out, and had just got so far down that there was no hope of being able to snub when we discovered that the calm had been but a treacherous lull, the precursor of a storm. The sky clouded over, the wind rose high, and the rain came down mercilessly, causing one to have gloomy forebodings of damp blankets at night. Still we had to keep on our way, the pilot anxiously watching our progress and giving eager orders to row! row! But all the efforts of the rowers were in vain, and gradually, surely, we were drifted out of the right channel, and driven towards a place where the stream rushed swiftly through an opening scarcely affording us room to pass between rocks which rose up on either side like a gateway, and where immediately beyond the current took a sudden turn. It was an anxious moment as we glided through at an immense pace, but we escaped well, except one dram, which struck on the rocks and lost a float. The storm passed away after doing us this mischief, and the night became bright and clear. But this was not the last of our mishaps. Driven out of the proper channel, the pilot had lost his way among the labyrinth of isles which stud this mouth of the Ottawa, and his only resource was to allow the current to carry us forward at its will, rowing merely to escape being driven ashore on one of the islands. In a short time we were rejoiced by the sight of one of the lights which dot the course of the St. Lawrence; but, on nearing it, our hopes were dashed when we discovered that the current was driving us straight upon it. The unfortunate crew, fatigued as they were by their exertions during the storm, had to row desperately again. But it was of no use, the raft could not be made to budge from its course, and the pilot was obliged to give up in despair. We stood prepared to meet the worst. As for me, I expected that the raft would go to pieces, and that we should be left standing shivering all through the night on the bare rock on which the lighthouse was built. I was standing ruminating on this anything but pleasant prospect, prepared to hear the smashing up of the timber, when I was pleasantly surprised by

hearing a shout announcing that the raft had grounded. The men leaped ashore with handspikes, and did what they could to ease it off again. As the stern swung with the current the bow slipped off, and thus quietly ended a catastrophe which I had concluded, from the despairing countenance of the pilot as he told the men to cease rowing, could scarcely have failed to be a disastrous one.

Soon we were safely fast to our steamer, and speedily accomplished the remainder of our voyage, for two days more saw us at Quebec—nothing beyond running foul of the cable of a schooner at anchor, and thereby losing another float, and a stiff breeze in crossing Lake St. Peter, which still more broke up our already damaged drams, and lost us two or three sticks more, occurring to break the dreary monotony of sitting on the timber with nothing to do but to listen to the ceaseless thumping of the paddlewheels a-head. Having reached the "cove," or timber depôt, which was our destination, we made fast to the outlying wharves for the night, and the next morning the men were paid off. In the course of a tide or two we were boarded by the men of the cove and taken to a place of security, the rafting materials despatched to the upward-bound steamer, the men who had stayed to pack them up paid off, and I obtained a receipt for the raft. This was my last act as clerk of the raft; the timber had now passed from the hands of the manufacturer, and had entered the stores of the merchant.